

**OWEN ROE
O'NEILL**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649125777

Owen Roe O'Neill by J. F. Taylor

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**OWEN ROE
O'NEILL**

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Small Crown 8vo, Paper Covers, 1s. each. Cloth, 2s. each.

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London : T. FISHER UNWIN.

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THIRD IMPRESSION.

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ANNALS OF THE
ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE
1873-1911
VOLUME I
PART I
1873-1880



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PREFACE.

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Y some strange fate Owen Roe O'Neill, the most illustrious man of action that Ireland has produced, still remains almost unknown to his countrymen and to the world. His name indeed has been brought home to the Irish people

by the genius of Davis, but no one has endeavoured to give to this *nominis umbra* substance and form. The history of this great man is indeed to be found only in the crude materials of contemporary documents, for writers of his own and later times, while mentioning his name with admiration and praise, have left the records of his life almost untouched. Clarendon

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who had every reason for political hostility, still bears testimony to the purity of his character and his unblemished honour. But no historian has yet recounted his singular military achievements, nor attempted to show how his great soldiership was combined with clearness and breadth of political vision, deep intuition of men, and genius for conciliation of liberty and law. It is unfit that this heroic memory should perish from the mind of Ireland.

The purpose of this sketch is to show how the figure of O'Neill stands out against the darkness and disaster of his age. In doing this within a limited space it was unavoidable that many conditions and movements of the time should be but lightly touched upon; and it has been impossible, for instance, to trace the motives which guided the crooked conduct of the men of the Pale or the vacillations of ecclesiastical policy. This short volume must, therefore, be looked upon as a mere introduction to a more full study of these still obscure times.

For the present my only intention has been to bring back to Irishmen the remembrance of a great man, who, by the completeness of his endowment in intellect and virtue, by his commanding mind, character, and will, is lifted into the highest rank of heroes.

J. F. TAYLOR.



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